Capacity Self-Assessment Framework for Solutions Grantees

Framework Overview: This framework and self-reflection tool is intended to help organizations self-assess their capacity to support equity-centered strategic learning work. The framework is organized around **eight capacities** and associated definitions. With each capacity, there is a list of **"Look-fors"** that articulate what it might look like for an organization that wants to strengthen their strategic learning work. Equity is embedded within each capacity, guided by a liberatory mindset that aims to shift power to those most affected by the system.

The **purpose** of the framework and tool is to allow leaders and teams to:
- Understand what "good" looks like in each category
- Critically reflect on where they are currently in each category
- Collectively identify aspirations for their work in each capacity in order to guide time, energy, and resources
- Get help and support tailored to their current capacity and aspirations

Get Started: The framework is best applied as a part of an interactive, reflective exercise. To have the Catalyst:Ed team walk you and your team through the accompanying exercise, please email us at si-k12@catalyst-ed.org.

Prefer to use the framework yourself? Go through each category and review the "look fors". After you've reviewed the look-fors, take a step back and ask yourself: How important is this category given our context? Where are we with respect to it? Where do we wish to be? Where do we need clarity or alignment? Where do we need help? Feel free to copy the Google docs version of the framework and mark it up or make edits as you do this.

Capacity	Definition	Aligned Look-Fors. "There is evidence that the organization has…"
Exhibit Evidence of Organizational Commitment to Strategic Learning	Demonstrate foundational orientation towards measurement, strategic learning, and evidence based decision making.	- A **leadership team** that signals strategic learning as an area of organizational commitment; designates operational capacity to advance the work; models the integration of data to drive decision-making - A clearly articulated **theory of change and affiliated assumptions.** This includes clearly articulated **strategic goals and anticipated outcomes** - A well-developed **measurement, learning, & evaluation strategy and design** that underlies your organization's work and reflects the theory of change. This strategy should encourage rapid learning cycles to allow reflection and growth. Additionally, it should integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into its construction - A **culture of learning & reflection** that enables ongoing conversations with multiple organizational stakeholders about the work
Allocate Organizational Resources to Support Strategic Learning	Allocates human and financial capital towards the development, advancement, and execution of strategic learning practices.	- Allocated **budget and time** to support strategic learning work - Integrated strategic learning in the expectations of staff's **roles and responsibilities** - Opportunities for **training and capacity building** related to strategic learning - Resources to bring in **external expertise** to advance work when necessary
Center Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Strategic Learning	Create data practices that explicitly tend to and capture an environment of involvement, respect, and connection among team members from a wide range of identities, perspectives, and experiences so they can work across schools to remove the predictability of student success or failure that correlates with social and cultural factors such as race, income, and many	- Clearly articulated **equity values**; Diversity, equity, and inclusion are explicitly mentioned in strategic learning values and plans and there are **routines for exploring biases**, **identities, and values** and how they manifest in what is considered evidence, expected outcomes, and other relevant levers of strategic learning.. **Equity-relevant evidence** that is identified by considering carefully what counts as "relevant" evidence and seeks to be inclusive of multiple perspectives in the measurement and learning work - Opportunities for relevant **communities to have co-ownership** of, and a voice in, the design and outputs of measurement and learning;

	more.	students' and teachers' voices shape findings; opportunities for community stakeholders to help interpret and make meaning of the evidence. • Aligned on **common definitions and language surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion** and follows an agreed upon set of norms developed from that lens.
Develop Systems and Practices for Analytics, Measurement, & Evaluation	Collect, analyze, and report on data to determine where, whether, and how the organization is moving toward its identified goals, as well as to share and celebrate successes.	• Developed **evidence and tools to effectively assess strategic learning;** staff are prepared to gather and analyze multiple types of data to inform strategic learning, decision-making, and growth. This includes documenting evidence of **implementation quality** to ensure that they collect data on the quality or fidelity of program implementation • Create opportunities for **short-term measurement and learning cycles**, which encourage near real-time reflection and "productive failure" from which staff can rapidly learn • Provide a set of protocols and tools to help teams **collect, analyze and discuss evidence with an equity lens**. • Structured opportunities to collect multiple sources of evidence, which allows for the designation of **early evidence (e.g., leading indicators) of progress,** as well as strategic considerations of what evidence of impact and how progress towards desired outcomes can be captured.
Build a Data Infrastructure	Develop systems and processes that allow the organization to reliably and securely collect, connect, manage, and report evidence.	• Well-developed and utilized **data systems, technology, and databases** • Identified **equity-relevant data** to track internal and external metrics. Ensure that the data advance equity (e.g., data is disaggregated by race, gender, and socioeconomic class) and come in diverse forms (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, community insights) to ensure that their is a broad lens on defining and measuring "quality" • Created systems to monitor **data quality and credibility;** promote **data privacy and security;** and **data access** & use.
Create Strategies for Practical Measurement	Develop staff capacity and the creation internal systems that help staff identify, collect, analyze, and discuss the data	• Integrated **measurement and learning in program planning**, which informs the design, improvement, scaling, and ending of programs • Integrated measurement and learning and the **use of evidence into**

	necessary to understand if and how intentional approaches to change are having intended effects for the population they are designed to reach. Leverage data-informed approaches to reflect on practices and their intended effects.	**regular, ongoing practice** (e.g., in team check-ins and leadership/board meetings) and ensures that these efforts are leveraged to inform decision-making. • Utilized evidence to foster opportunities for **scenario planning,** which allows staff to discuss how strategy and activities might change with emergent results (e.g., strategy to scale with positive evidence or pivot with negative)
Develop Practices for Strategic Communication	Develop resources that effectively convey strategic measurement learnings for diverse audiences.	• Adequate systems for **internal knowledge sharing and communication** exist and are used (e.g., curated examples of best practices and associated staff experts) • Adequate systems for **external sharing and dissemination** exist and are used. Also have systems in place to monitor how successful these opportunities for sharing are (e.g., evidence of exposure & take-up). • Data presentation strategies that are relevant, digestible, and accessible to be **shared with impacted communities**. Developing such experiences include community-representative co-authorship where appropriate)
Construct a System of Knowledge Management	Develop and manage a system (both human and technical) to surface lessons from research and practice, consolidate or adapt where necessary, and make readily available to multiple stakeholders to enable reflection and analysis and to accelerate learning.	• **Protocols, systems, and processes** for building knowledge, codifying practices, and sharing knowledge across our network. Ensure that there is an onboarding process for how to contribute to and use our knowledge management system. • Alignment of knowledge management with **decision-making systems**, ensuring that relevant staff has ready access to appropriate learning documents at the right time to help guide organizational decisions. • **Collaborative learning** through which the organizational culture incentivizes continuous improvement, celebrating failure that leads to learning, and sharing knowledge and perspectives (e.g., "most instructive failure" award). Ensures that multiple stakeholder perspectives are integrated throughout these learning opportunities. • Opportunities for **external stakeholder use.** Results are useful to, shared with, and utilized to advance partnerships with external stakeholders